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Innovative self-brand congruity as a mediator of CSR and gamification effects on sustainable consumer engagement

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Abstract

The global food and beverage sector faces mounting pressure to balance economic growth with sustainable development goals, as consumer awareness of environmental and social responsibility continues to rise. The challenge lies in developing marketing innovation strategies that effectively engage environmentally-conscious consumers while contributing to long-term sustainability objectives. This study examines how innovative self-brand congruity mediates the relationship between marketing brand innovation strategies and sustainable consumer engagement in Indonesia's coffee shop industry. Using 300 survey responses and PLS-SEM analysis, results demonstrate that corporate social responsibility significantly influences consumer perceived brand innovativeness, while gamification shows no significant effect. Consumer perceived brand innovativeness significantly influences both innovative self-brand congruity and brand engagement, with self-brand congruity serving as a key mediator that translates innovation perceptions into sustained consumer involvement. The findings offer clear guidance for stakeholders: prioritize authentic CSR initiatives over gamification, communicate CSR through cultural storytelling, and develop localized sustainability frameworks. Businesses should adopt sustainability-based loyalty programs, forge environmental partnerships, and train employees to convey social mission values. The study emphasizes shifting from technology-driven gamification to meaningful CSR efforts that align with consumers' innovative self-identity, fostering authentic competitive advantage and lasting social impact.

Keywords: Innovative self-brand congruity, CSR, Gamification, Consumer perceived brand innovativeness, Brand engagement, Sustainability

1. Introduction

The global business landscape has undergone a significant transformation, driven by technological advancement, demographic shifts, and evolving consumer preferences. Globalization has created new opportunities while simultaneously presenting challenges for business operators across diverse industries, particularly the food and beverage (F&B) sector, which has experienced rapid growth worldwide. The global café and restaurant industry has evolved into a highly competitive sector characterized by continuous innovation in marketing strategies and consumer experience enhancement. This phenomenon is also evident in Indonesia, one of Southeast Asia's largest economies, which has experienced rapid development in its business landscape. Indonesian coffee shops have demonstrated notable commitment to corporate social responsibility through various initiatives. For instance, Janji Jiwa has implemented comprehensive programs including direct partnerships with local coffee farmers to improve their welfare, utilization of environmentally-friendly recyclable packaging materials, waste reduction programs across all outlets, and active contributions to community education through scholarship programs for underprivileged students [1]. These CSR initiatives reflect the industry's growing awareness of social and environmental responsibilities while building stronger connections with socially-conscious consumers. A particularly prominent phenomenon is the substantial expansion of Indonesia's middle-class population [2]. Research by The World Bank has documented that Indonesia's middle class has increased from 7% of the population in 2002 to 20% in 2020, with projections indicating it will reach 33% by 2030.

This middle-class expansion has transformed societal consumption patterns, generating increased demand for secondary and tertiary goods and services, including premium food and beverage experiences. Consistent with this trend, Indonesia has witnessed a significant emergence of the creative economy. According to data from Indonesia's Creative Economy Agency (Bekraf), the creative economy's contribution to national GDP increased from 7.38% in 2015 to 7.66% in 2020, with projections anticipated to reach 9% by 2025 [3]. Within this context, the food and beverage industry, particularly the café and restaurant sector, has experienced extraordinary development. A significant growth trend has emerged in the food and beverage industry's contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from 2010 through 2024. This middle-class growth demonstrates a positive correlation with the development of Indonesia's food and beverage industry sector, including the rapidly expanding coffee industry in recent years. Indonesia itself holds the position as the world's third-largest coffee producer, following Brazil and Vietnam [4]. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) data, global coffee production totaled 170 million bags of 60 kg each during the 2022/2023 production cycle, with a significant contribution from Indonesia. Coffee is no longer merely perceived as a beverage providing stimulant effects, but has evolved into an integral component of modern society's lifestyle and culture [5]. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in their 2023 Indonesian Statistics report indicates that Indonesia's peak coffee output occurred in 2022. The growth in coffee consumption in Indonesia is driven by increased purchasing power, lifestyle changes, and the emergence of local coffee shops offering unique experiences.

Competition within Indonesia's coffee industry is currently highly competitive. Although the coffee industry demonstrates rapid development, significant challenges exist for business operators, particularly modern coffee shops. Intense competition necessitates innovative strategies to survive and thrive. One factor intensifying competition is the low barriers to entry in the coffee shop industry, particularly with the widespread adoption of digital technologies and standardized operational models [6]. Numerous challenges emerge from the coffee industry, particularly in brand specification. Various coffee companies face similar constraints, especially branding costs. Several companies continue to struggle with enhancing brand quality to drive sales performance. Sustained competitive turbulence brings consequences requiring vigilance. Over time, marketing brand innovation implemented by a brand becomes more easily replicated by competitors, potentially causing initial competitive advantages to lose their uniqueness [7].

To address these challenges, various strategies can be optimized by coffee companies to enhance brand strategy, particularly two unique approaches: gamification and corporate social responsibility (CSR). Local coffee shops in Indonesia have adopted marketing brand innovation approaches through both strategies. Gamification involves implementing game-based elements within non-gaming environments [6], such as creating loyalty applications with point systems and membership levels. Research by Eisingrich et al. [7] found that gamification can enhance customer engagement through expectation mechanisms generated. CSR also serves as an effective marketing brand innovation strategy for local coffee shops in Indonesia. CSR encompasses three main pillars: environmental, social, and economic. Its implementation in local coffee shops includes utilizing environmentally friendly materials, sustainable waste management, and coffee farmer empowerment [8]. Based on research by [9], leading local coffee shops in Indonesia's coffee industry have implemented various forms of marketing brand innovation, such as utilizing coffee shop applications that have incorporated gamification and CSR in their marketing techniques. This follows other leading brands that have previously dominated the global coffee market with high popularity among consumers.

The implementation of marketing brand innovation through gamification and CSR can influence consumer perceived brand innovativeness (CPBI). CPBI represents consumer evaluations regarding a brand's innovation capabilities in product development track record, creativity level, and future innovation potential [10]. When consumers perceive a brand as innovative, they are inclined to exhibit favorable attitudes, high satisfaction, along strong loyalty toward that particular brand [11]. This research introduces a novel concept: innovative self-brand congruity, a synthesis of self-congruity theory [12] and brand innovation concepts. Innovative self-brand congruity is defined as representing congruence linking consumers' innovative self-concept with the brand’s innovative image perceived as innovative. This concept provides a comprehensive understanding of how such congruence can drive sustainable brand engagement. Previous research has shown varied results regarding the relationship between CPBI and brand engagement. This inconsistency indicates the potential role of mediating variables, specifically innovative self-brand congruity. Nevertheless, existing literature reveals critical gaps that this research addresses. Although studies have examined direct effects of marketing innovation strategies on consumer perceptions [10] [11], limited research explores the mediating mechanisms explaining how these perceptions translate into sustained engagement. Additionally, self-congruity theory has focused on traditional brand attributes rather than innovation-specific congruence, creating a theoretical void in understanding how consumers' innovative self-concepts align with brand innovation perceptions. Furthermore, most studies examine gamification and CSR separately, with insufficient attention to their comparative effectiveness in collectivist cultures like Indonesia, where social responsibility may outweigh individual achievement strategies.

Brand engagement itself has become a primary focus in contemporary marketing strategies. Brand engagement represents the extent of consumers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral involvement with a brand once [13]. Consumers are deeply engaged with a brand; they not only make repeat purchases but also become enthusiastic brand advocates, spreading positive word-of-mouth and building long-term relationships with the brand [14]. In the context of local coffee shops, brand engagement becomes increasingly important due to coffee consumers' characteristics that tend toward switching behavior [15]. Coffee consumers, particularly younger generations, frequently seek new experiences and flavor variations. Therefore, building strong brand engagement becomes a crucial strategy for customer retention amid intense competition. This research aims to analyze the role of marketing brand innovation (gamification and CSR) on CPBI and innovative self-brand congruity, as well as how both concepts influence brand engagement in local coffee shops in Indonesia. Specifically, this research will: (1) examine the influence of gamification and CSR on CPBI; (2) analyze the relationship between CPBI and innovative self-brand congruity; (3) investigate the impact of CPBI and innovative self-brand congruity on brand engagement; and (4) identify the mediating role of innovative self-brand congruity in the relationship between CPBI and brand engagement. The urgency of this research lies in the importance of understanding how marketing brand innovation through gamification and CSR can influence consumer perceptions of brand innovation and the congruence of innovative self-image with brands, and how this ultimately drives brand engagement in the retail business context.

The results of this research are expected to provide theoretical contributions by developing a conceptual model connecting marketing brand innovation, CPBI, innovative self-brand congruity, and brand engagement within the coffee shop industry context. Practically, this research can provide insights for coffee industry practitioners regarding effective marketing brand innovation strategies to enhance brand innovation perception, build congruence between consumers' innovative self-image and brands, and ultimately strengthen brand engagement, which serves as the key to success amid increasingly intense coffee industry competition.

1.1. Literature review and hypothesis development

This research is primarily grounded in self-congruity theory as the overarching theoretical foundation, integrated with the brand innovation framework to explain how marketing innovation strategies influence consumer behavior through self-concept alignment mechanisms. Self-congruity theory, developed by Sirgy [12], serves as the grand theory underlying this research. This theory posits that consumers are motivated to choose and engage with brands that are congruent with their self-concept or desired self-image. The theory suggests that the degree of match between a consumer's self-image and brand image significantly influences consumer attitudes, preferences, and behaviors. According to this theory, consumers use brands as vehicles for self-expression and identity reinforcement, leading to stronger emotional connections and sustained engagement when congruence exists [12].

Building upon self-congruity theory, this research introduces the innovation dimension by integrating the consumer perceived brand innovativeness (CPBI) concept. Innovation perception is a critical brand attribute that influences consumer evaluations and responses [10]. When combined with self-congruity theory, this creates a framework where consumers with innovative self-concepts naturally seek alignment with brands they perceive as innovative [16]. This theoretical integration addresses the gap in traditional self-congruity research, which has focused on general brand personality dimensions rather than specific innovation characteristics. The theoretical contribution of this research lies in extending self-congruity theory by proposing innovative self-brand congruity as a specific manifestation of self-concept alignment in the innovation domain. This extension suggests that when consumers perceive themselves as innovative individuals, they experience stronger congruence with brands that demonstrate innovation capabilities through their marketing strategies [10] [11]. This congruence then drives sustained brand engagement as consumers use innovative brands to express and reinforce their innovative self-identity [13] [14]. This theoretical framework provides the conceptual foundation for understanding how marketing brand innovation strategies influence consumer perceptions, create self-concept alignment, and ultimately drive engagement behaviors through the psychological mechanism of identity-brand congruence [12] [13].

1.1.1. Marketing brand innovation

Marketing brand innovation can be defined as innovative strategies for building and strengthening brands through novel approaches that create value for consumers. Within the coffee industry context, marketing brand innovation manifests itself in various forms, with gamification and corporate social responsibility (CSR) serving as two primary approaches. Gamification is the methodology of implementing game mechanics along with game thinking to engage audiences and solve problems [17]. Further elaborate that gamification refers to the use of gaming design components within non-gaming environments [6]. This definition emphasizes that gamification is not about creating complete games, but rather involves extracting specific aspects from games such as mechanics, dynamics, and aesthetics—and applying them to other contexts. Meanwhile, CSR is defined by [8] as an organization's commitment to promoting sustainable economic development while recognizing social and environmental responsibilities. In the branding context, CSR can be viewed as a corporate strategy for building positive brand reputation and image in the eyes of consumers and other stakeholders. CSR branding represents companies' efforts to communicate their CSR initiatives and programs to the public with the objective of gaining recognition and support from stakeholders [18]. Within the Indonesian cultural context, CSR takes on additional significance due to the deeply embedded concept of *gotong royong* and social responsibility toward the community. Indonesian consumers, influenced by collectivist cultural values, tend to evaluate brands not only based on individual benefits but also on their contributions to societal welfare, which may explain the stronger effectiveness of CSR compared to individualistic gamification approaches in driving brand innovation perceptions. In the cultural context of Southeast Asian markets, particularly Indonesia, CSR has a deeper meaning due to the concepts of mutual cooperation and social responsibility that are deeply embedded in society. Consumers influenced by collectivist cultural values tend to evaluate brands not only based on individual benefits but also on their contribution to societal well-being [19]. This may explain the higher effectiveness of CSR compared to individualistic gamification approaches in driving perceptions of brand innovation.

1.1.2. Consumer perceived brand innovativeness (CPBI)

Consumer perceived brand innovativeness (CPBI) refers to consumer assessments of a brand's track record of innovation in products, level of creativity, together with the potential to continue innovative endeavors in the future within a specific market [10]. This definition emphasizes the importance of innovation consistency over time in shaping consumer perceptions. This definition is expanded by [11], stating that CPBI is the extent to which consumers view a brand as being innovative and different relative to competing brands in the same product category. This means that local brands need to communicate their innovative values effectively and consistently through various consumer touchpoints. Another aspect that needs attention in building CPBI is collaboration and co-creation with consumers. CPBI explains that consumers' perception is that a brand frequently introduces new ideas, new products, or new ways of doing things. In this regard, involving consumers in the innovation process can enhance their perception of the brand's innovativeness [20]. This consumer involvement not only produces user-centric innovation but also strengthens the perception of being an innovative and customer-oriented brand. Three dimensions of CPBI: perceived novelty in concepts, perceived technological advancement, and perceived competitive benefits [21].

1.1.3. Innovative self-brand congruity (ISBC)

Innovative self-brand congruity represents a novel concept developed from self-congruity theory and brand innovation concepts. Consumers are inclined to choose brands that match their personal image [12]. Building upon the foundational work of [9], which demonstrated that consumer perceived brand innovativeness (CPBI) significantly influences customer satisfaction and purchase intention, this research extends the theoretical framework by introducing innovative self-brand congruity as a crucial mediating mechanism. Shams et al. [10] established that brands leveraging technological and symbolic innovation can enhance consumer perceptions, providing the conceptual foundation for understanding how consumers with innovative self-concepts respond to perceived brand innovation across various industries, including coffee shops. Through the development of the innovative self-brand congruity variable, this research endeavors to provide a new perspective on understanding the relationship between consumers' innovative self-image and their perception of brand innovation. Innovative self-brand congruity represents a combination of consumers' innovative self-image with brand image perceived as innovative. This refers to the extent to which consumers regard themselves as innovative individuals who enjoy trying new things and following trend developments, as well as the extent to which consumers view and feel aligned with a brand as an innovative, dynamic brand that consistently delivers new and different products, services, or experiences.

Therefore, innovative self-brand congruity can be concluded as representing congruence linking consumers innovative self-concept with brand’s innovative image perceived as innovative, involving cognitive aspects (beliefs and knowledge about brand innovation), affective aspects (positive feelings and emotions toward innovative brands), and evaluative aspects (overall evaluation of the congruence linking self-concepts and brand perception), as well as self-identification processes with the brand, where consumers adopt the innovative brand image as part of their self-concept and feel emotionally connected to the brand's achievements or setbacks. This conceptualization addresses the gap identified in [10]'s work by proposing that CPBI's influence on consumer outcomes operates through the mediating pathway of identity-brand alignment, particularly when consumers possess strong innovative self-concepts. The theoretical contribution lies in explaining how perceived brand innovation translates into sustained consumer engagement through the mechanism of self-concept congruence. In the innovation context, such congruence represents the extent to which consumers who consider themselves innovative feel compatibility with brands that are also perceived as innovative.

1.1.4. Brand engagement

Brand engagement is defined as representing the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral involvement of consumers with a brand. To build sustainable brand engagement, marketers need to understand consumer motivations, needs, and preferences, and proactively engage them in dialogue and value co-creation [13]. Brand engagement reflects a strong and stable long-term relationship between consumers and brands, where consumers are consistently engaged, loyal, and supportive of the brand across various interactions and touchpoints [22]. Two main dimensions of brand engagement: transactional engagement behavior and non-transactional engagement behavior [23].

1.1.5. Direct relationship between marketing brand innovation (gamification and CSR) and CPBI

Previous research shows that marketing brand innovation through gamification can increase CPBI. In a study conducted by Eisingerich et al. [7] found that gamification can increase customer engagement and encourage desired behavior. Other research added that a fun gaming experience can improve consumer perceptions of a company's innovation capabilities [24]. Meanwhile, research by Habachi et al. [25] found that gaming experiences in brand applications have a positive and direct impact on behavioral intentions and indirectly influence brand loyalty through customer brand engagement. Gamification features related to achievement and social interaction are positively associated with various forms of brand engagement, which ultimately increases brand equity [24]. Within the coffee industry context, implementing point reward systems, membership levels, and daily missions in loyalty applications can create enjoyable and interactive experiences, thereby enhancing consumer perceptions of brand innovativeness. Building on these findings, when coffee shop consumers interact with gamification elements such as point systems, badges, and achievement levels, they experience novel and creative approaches to customer interaction that differentiate the brand from traditional service models. This interactive experience signals the brand's willingness to adopt cutting-edge customer engagement strategies, leading consumers to perceive the brand as forward-thinking and innovative. The cognitive processing of these game-like elements as "new ways of doing business" directly translates into enhanced perceptions of brand innovativeness [7]. Therefore, based on this cognitive processing mechanism whereby gamification elements signal brand innovativeness through novel customer interaction approaches, it is hypothesized that:

H1: Marketing brand innovation in the form of gamification positively influences CPBI.

Additionally, marketing brand innovation through CSR can also influence CPBI. When consumers perceive CSR initiatives as providing value to society, they tend to become more engaged with the brand [18]. The positive effect of strategic CSR communication on customer engagement can be strengthened by the company's previously established CSR reputation [26]. The mechanism linking CSR to CPBI operates through consumers' recognition of creative and proactive approaches to social responsibility. When coffee shops implement innovative CSR programs such as sustainable packaging solutions, local farmer empowerment initiatives, or community development projects, consumers interpret these activities as evidence of the brand's ability to think beyond conventional business practices. This perception of social innovation directly contributes to overall brand innovativeness perceptions, as CSR represents the brand's capacity to develop novel solutions for societal challenges while conducting business operations [26]. Thus, based on this interpretive process whereby innovative CSR is recognized as evidence of the brand's ability to develop creative solutions to social issues, it is hypothesized that:

H2: Marketing brand innovation in the form of CSR positively influences CPBI.

1.1.6. Direct relationships among consumer CPBI, innovative self-brand congruity, and brand engagement

Consumer perceived brand innovativeness (CPBI) has the potential to influence innovative self-brand congruity. Consumers who perceive a brand as innovative tend to associate the brand with characteristics such as novelty, creativity, and uniqueness [11]. Consumers tend to identify with brands that have a level of innovation similar to their personal level of innovation [16]. The psychological process linking CPBI to innovative self-brand congruity operates through identity-matching mechanisms. When consumers perceive a brand as highly innovative, they mentally categorize it with attributes such as progressiveness, creativity, and forward-thinking. Consumers who view themselves as innovative individuals naturally seek alignment with brands that reflect similar characteristics. This cognitive matching process creates congruence between their innovative self-concept and the brand's innovative image, as both the consumer and brand share common innovative attributes that facilitate psychological connection and identification [16]. Consequently, based on this identity matching process whereby innovative consumers naturally seek alignment with brands possessing similar innovative attributes, it is hypothesized that:

H3: CPBI has a positive effect on innovative self-brand congruity.

CPBI can also influence brand engagement. Positive brand perceptions, including innovation, positively influence consumer engagement [13]. Brands considered innovative often present new products, features, or experiences that are attractive for consumers to explore [11]. The relationship between CPBI and brand engagement is driven by curiosity and exploration motivation. When consumers perceive a brand as innovative, they anticipate ongoing novelty and creativity in the brand's offerings, creating intrinsic motivation to maintain active involvement with the brand. This anticipation of continuous innovation generates sustained interest and willingness to invest cognitive, emotional, and behavioral resources in the brand relationship. The perceived innovativeness signals future value and unique experiences, compelling consumers to engage more deeply to access these anticipated benefits [13]. Therefore, based on this exploration motivation and anticipation of continuous innovation generated by brand innovativeness perceptions, it is hypothesized that:

H4: CPBI has a positive effect on brand engagement.

Innovative self-brand congruity also has the potential to influence brand engagement. Consumers experience a fit between self-image and brand image; they tend to develop a strong psychological connection with the brand [27]. Consumer self-identification with the brand can foster feelings of attachment and long-term commitment [28]. The mechanism connecting innovative self-brand congruity to brand engagement operates through self-enhancement and identity reinforcement processes. When consumers perceive alignment between their innovative self-concept and a brand's innovative image, engaging with the brand becomes a means of expressing and reinforcing their innovative identity. This self-expressive function creates emotional attachment as the brand serves as an extension of their self-concept. Consequently, consumers become more motivated to maintain active engagement to sustain this identity-brand connection and continue benefiting from the self-enhancement that the relationship provides [27]. Hence, based on this self-enhancement and identity reinforcement process that occurs when there is congruence between innovative self-concept and innovative brand image, it is hypothesized that:

H5: Innovative self-brand congruity positively influences brand engagement.

1.1.7. Mediating effect of CPBI between gamification and brand engagement

Gamification, as a form of brand marketing innovation that applies game design elements in non-game contexts [6], has the potential to enhance brand engagement through brand innovation perception (consumer perceived brand innovativeness). When consumers interact with gamification elements from a brand, this increases curiosity and perception of relative advantage of the product [17]. An enjoyable gaming experience can enhance consumer perceptions of a company's innovation capabilities [24]. This increased perception of brand innovation then drives deeper engagement with the brand. Gamification principles raise expectations and consequently increase customer engagement [7]. This relationship unfolds through a sequential cognitive pathway where gamification features initially serve as signals of brand progressiveness through their novel interaction approaches. As consumers experience these innovative elements, they develop stronger perceptions of the brand's forward-thinking nature, which subsequently motivates greater investment of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral resources in the brand relationship. When customers encounter creative gamification features, they mentally categorize the brand as technologically advanced and customer-centric, leading to increased willingness to engage across multiple touchpoints [17]. Therefore, based on this sequential cognitive pathway whereby gamification enhances brand engagement through the intermediary role of improved brand innovation perceptions, it is hypothesized that:

H6: CPBI mediates the relationship between gamification and brand engagement.

1.1.8. Mediating effect of CPBI between CSR and brand engagement

Corporate social responsibility (CSR), serving as a type of brand marketing innovation, also has the potential to enhance brand engagement through brand innovation perception. When consumers perceive CSR initiatives as providing value or benefits to society (perceived community value), they tend to become more engaged with that brand [18]. The perceived community value of strategic CSR initiatives to beneficiaries by customers has been identified as an effective precursor to customer engagement [26]. CSR can serve as a brand differentiation, making it perceived as more innovative compared to other brands. This suggests that CSR has a substantial impact on customer brand identification and customer satisfaction, which in turn influences customer engagement [26]. The underlying psychological process involves consumers' interpretation of innovative CSR programs as evidence of the brand's creative approach to social problem-solving. When brands implement distinctive sustainability initiatives or community development programs, consumers recognize these efforts as manifestations of progressive thinking and social innovation [18]. This recognition of the brand's capacity for meaningful innovation then fosters deeper emotional connections and behavioral commitment, as consumers appreciate brands that demonstrate both business acumen and social consciousness. Thus, based on this interpretive process whereby CSR strengthens brand engagement through the facilitating role of enhanced brand innovation perceptions, it is hypothesized that:

H7: CPBI to serve as a mediator in the connection linking CSR and brand engagement.

1.1.9. Mediating role of CPBI between gamification and innovative self-brand congruity

Gamification not only enhances brand engagement but also has the potential to increase innovative self-brand congruity through enhanced brand innovation perception. Interactive and enjoyable gamification elements enhance brand perception as innovative [7]. This enhanced brand innovation perception then facilitates congruence with consumers who identify themselves as innovative. Gamification creates more innovative brand perceptions, which in turn enhance self-image congruity among consumers [25]. This connection emerges through a dual-stage cognitive evaluation where interactive gamification elements first establish the brand's innovative credentials through their creative and engaging nature. Subsequently, consumers who consider themselves forward-thinking and tech-savvy naturally gravitate toward brands that mirror their innovative characteristics [25]. The cognitive alignment occurs as consumers recognize similarities between their own openness to new experiences and the brand's willingness to adopt cutting-edge customer engagement strategies. This psychological matching creates a foundation for sustained identity-brand alignment. Consequently, based on this dual-stage evaluation process whereby gamification strengthens innovative self-brand congruity through the bridging function of enhanced brand innovation perceptions, it is hypothesized that:

H8: CPBI mediates the relationship between gamification and innovative self-brand congruity.

1.1.10. Mediating role of CPBI between CSR and innovative self-brand congruity

Innovative CSR initiatives can enhance innovative self-brand congruity through brand innovation perception as a mediator. When brands implement creative and distinctive CSR programs, this enhances consumer perceptions of that brand's innovation [20]. This enhanced innovation perception then facilitates congruence with consumers who identify themselves as innovative. CSR enhances brand perception as innovative and progressive, which subsequently increases consumer identification with the brand [29]. Consumers who perceive brands as innovative based on their CSR initiatives tend to experience congruence between their innovative self-image and that brand. The psychological dynamics unfold as consumers recognize innovative CSR as a manifestation of social entrepreneurship and creative problem-solving capabilities. When brands demonstrate novel approaches to addressing societal challenges, consumers who value innovation and social progress identify these efforts as reflective of their own forward-thinking values [18]. This cognitive resonance creates psychological compatibility between the consumer's innovative identity and the brand's socially innovative image. The alignment strengthens as consumers appreciate brands that channel creativity toward meaningful social impact, mirroring their own desire to contribute positively to society through innovative means [29]. Hence, based on this resonance process whereby innovative CSR fosters innovative self-brand congruity through the enabling role of social innovation perceptions, it is hypothesized that:

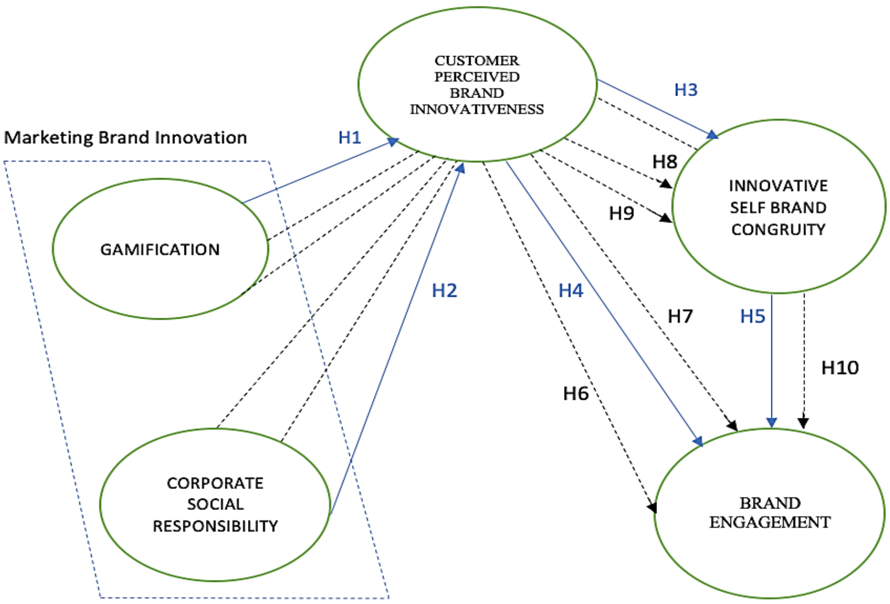
H9: CPBI mediates the connection linking CSR and innovative self-brand congruity

1.1.11. Mediating role of innovative self-brand congruity between CPBI and brand engagement

Research shows diverse findings regarding the relationship between CPBI and brand engagement, indicating potential mediators. Innovative self-brand congruity becomes a potential mediator based on self-congruity theory [12]. Consumers who perceive brands as innovative tend to associate those brands with characteristics of novelty and creativity [11]. This association is congruent with consumers' innovative self-image. Consumers tend to identify with brands whose innovation levels are similar to their personal innovation. This congruence then drives deeper engagement with the brand [16]. The explanatory framework centers on identity validation and self-expression dynamics, whereby consumers initially assess compatibility between their innovative self-concept and the brand's innovative reputation. When positive alignment emerges, engaging with the brand becomes a vehicle for communicating and reinforcing their innovative identity to themselves and others [12]. This self-expressive function transforms routine brand interactions into meaningful identity-affirming experiences that require ongoing participation to maintain psychological consistency. The brand essentially becomes an external representation of the consumer's internal innovative characteristics, creating emotional investment that sustains long-term engagement behaviors [16]. Therefore, based on this identity validation framework whereby innovative self-brand congruity amplifies brand engagement by serving as a conduit for identity expression and maintenance, it is hypothesized that:

H10: Innovative self-brand congruity thus mediates the connection linking CPBI and brand engagement.

A comprehensive literature review was conducted to establish the theoretical framework for this research. As illustrated in Figure 1, marketing brand innovation comprising gamification and CSR, consumer perceived brand innovativeness, innovative self-brand congruity, and brand engagement constitute the independent, mediating, and dependent variables, respectively. The figure demonstrates that the innovative self-brand congruity variable mediates the inconsistencies found in previous research concerning the connection between CPBI with brand engagement.



→ Direct effect ----> Indirect effect Figure 1. Study model

2. Research method

2.1. Sampling and data collection

This research employed a multi-stage sampling approach beginning with purposive sampling to identify target locations and subsequently using convenience sampling for respondent recruitment. The research sample comprised 300 respondents who are consumers of local coffee shop industry in Indonesia with inclusion criteria applied in respondent selection including: (1) consumers aged 16-50 years; (2) actively using the coffee shop application for at least 6 months; (3) possessing knowledge about CSR programs implemented by the respective local coffee shop; and (4) being loyal consumers with purchasing frequency of at least 5-6 times per month. The sampling process was conducted across five islands in Indonesia (Java, Kalimantan, Sumatra, Bali, and Sulawesi) to ensure comprehensive geographical representation. Potential respondents were initially screened through brief qualifying questions to confirm they met the inclusion criteria before proceeding with the full survey. The sample size of 300 respondents was determined based on [30] recommendations for PLS-SEM, which state that the standard recommendation is 300-400 observations to ensure unbiased parameter estimation and adequate analysis reliability. The sample size of 300 respondents meets the minimum standard required to generate reliable PLS-SEM analysis results. Data collection was carried out over a period of 8 weeks (March-April 2025) through structured surveys distributed online using the Google Form platform. The survey link was distributed through multiple channels, including social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp groups), coffee shop communities, and a direct approach to coffee shop customers with management permission. Prior to data collection, a pilot test was conducted with 30 respondents to ensure questionnaire clarity and reliability. The final data collection process included data validation procedures to identify and remove incomplete or inconsistent responses, resulting in 300 valid responses from an initial 347 collected surveys. The survey instrument was developed based on indicators derived from existing literature, with measurements using a 5-point Likert scale spanning from (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

2.2. Data analysis techniques

In this study, data analysis was performed using Smart PLS version 3.00 software. The structural equation modeling (SEM) approach was utilized due to its benefits in identifying various dimensions of a construct simultaneously, while measuring the strength of relationships or influences among factors whose indicators have been identified. PLS-SEM was selected over covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) because it is more suitable for exploratory research, developing new constructs like innovative self-brand congruity, can handle complex mediation models effectively, does not require multivariate normality assumptions, and works well with moderate sample sizes [30] [31]. This approach is also highly suitable for research that is exploratory and predictive in nature, particularly in the context of developing new theories, such as the innovative self-brand congruity concept introduced in this research.

The PLS-SEM methodology models predictions and measures both direct and indirect effects in business and management research, enabling simultaneous testing of complex relationships among constructs. The evaluation process begins with assessment of the measurement model to confirm construct validity and reliability, subsequently proceeding with structural model testing to examine research hypotheses [31]. This two-stage approach ensures that structural model interpretation is based on a robust and reliable measurement model. The analysis also includes evaluation of mediating effects to confirm the function of innovative self-brand congruity serving as a mediator within the connection linking CPBI and brand engagement, as well as the role of CPBI as a mediator between marketing brand innovation (gamification & CSR) with outcome variables.

2.3. Measurement model assessment

The measurement model evaluation in this research follows the two-stage procedure recommended in PLS-SEM literature, where outer model assessment precedes inner model evaluation to ensure construct validity and reliability before structural hypothesis testing [31]. This process encompasses systematic evaluation of three fundamental aspects: convergent validity, discriminant validity, along internal construct reliability. Convergent validity was evaluated through factor loading values and average variance extracted (AVE). Based on criteria from [32] and [33], minimum factor loading of 0.70 and minimum AVE of 0.50 serve as thresholds to confirm that indicators convergently measure the same construct. Discriminant validity was assessed through cross-loading examination and Fornell-Larcker standards to ensure that each indicator has higher loading on its intended construct compared to other constructs [34].

Internal reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability with a minimum threshold at 0.70 as the minimum criterion. Composite reliability is considered more suitable for the PLS-SEM context as it provides more accurate estimates of internal consistency [30]. A comprehensive evaluation of these three aspects ensures that the measurement model possesses robust psychometric properties before structural model testing. Assessment results indicate that all constructs—gamification, CSR, consumer perceived brand innovativeness (CPBI), innovative self-brand congruity (ISBC), and brand engagement meet the required validity and reliability standards. Detailed findings of the measurement model evaluation are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Measurement model assessment results

Construct	AVE	Conclusion
Gamification	0.599	Valid
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	0.684	Valid
Consumer Perceived Brand Innovativeness (CPBI)	0.739	Valid
Innovative Self Brand Congruity (ISBC)	0.715	Valid
Brand Engagement (BE)	0.698	Valid

Source: Data Processed SmartPLS 3, 2025

Table 2. Reliability test result

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	Decision
Gamification	0.948	0.954	Reliable
CSR	0.923	0.938	Reliable
CPBI	0.911	0.934	Reliable
ISBC	0.960	0.965	Reliable
BE	0.892	0.920	Reliable

Source: Data Processed SmartPLS 3, 2025

The measurement model evaluation results presented in Table 1 demonstrate that all constructs in this research meet the required convergent validity criteria. Analysis of outer loadings reveals that all indicators have factor loading scores above the 0.70 threshold, with the highest value range in the innovative self-brand congruity (ISBC) construct at 0.870 for indicator ISBC2.3, and the lowest value in the gamification construct at 0.707 for indicator G2.2. Overall, the average variance extracted (AVE) scores for all constructs exceed 0.50, demonstrating that the variance explained by each construct exceeds measurement error. The ISBC construct shows the highest AVE value at 0.715, followed by consumer perceived brand innovativeness (CPBI) with AVE 0.739, brand engagement (BE) with AVE 0.698, CSR with AVE 0.684, and gamification with AVE 0.599.

The internal reliability evaluation displayed in Table 2 confirms excellent consistency across all measurement instruments. Cronbach's Alpha scores span from 0.892 to 0.960, with the ISBC construct showing the highest reliability ($\alpha = 0.960$), followed by gamification ($\alpha = 0.948$), CSR ($\alpha = 0.923$), CPBI ($\alpha = 0.911$), and brand engagement ($\alpha = 0.892$). Similar results are also demonstrated in composite reliability values spanning from 0.920 to 0.965, where every construct meets excellent reliability standards. The consistency of results between both reliability indicators strengthens confidence in the internal consistency of the research instruments used. Achievement of reliability values well above the minimum threshold of 0.70 indicates that indicators within each construct have high coherence in measuring the intended concepts, thus enabling further analysis of the structural model with optimal confidence levels.

2.4. Structural model assessment

To evaluate the structural model (inner model), this research employs R^2 values that indicate the extent to which independent variables can account for the variability of dependent variables.

Table 3. R-square

Construct	R Square	R Square Adjusted
CPBI	0.704	0.698
ISBC	0.758	0.756
BE	0.769	0.765

Source: Data Processed SmartPLS 3, 2025

Table 3 displays the PLS analysis findings showing that the R^2 value of brand engagement is 0.769, meaning that 76.9% of its variation can be explained by CPBI and innovative self-brand congruity. Meanwhile, the innovative self-brand congruity variable has an R^2 value of 0.758, indicating that 75.8% of its variation is explained by CPBI. For CPBI, the R^2 value of 0.704 demonstrates that 70.4% of its variation is explained by gamification and CSR as exogenous variables. The obtained R^2 values demonstrate excellent predictive capability of the model, with all endogenous constructs having values above 0.70, confirming that the variable selection in the research model has been appropriate and the model possesses strong explanatory power.

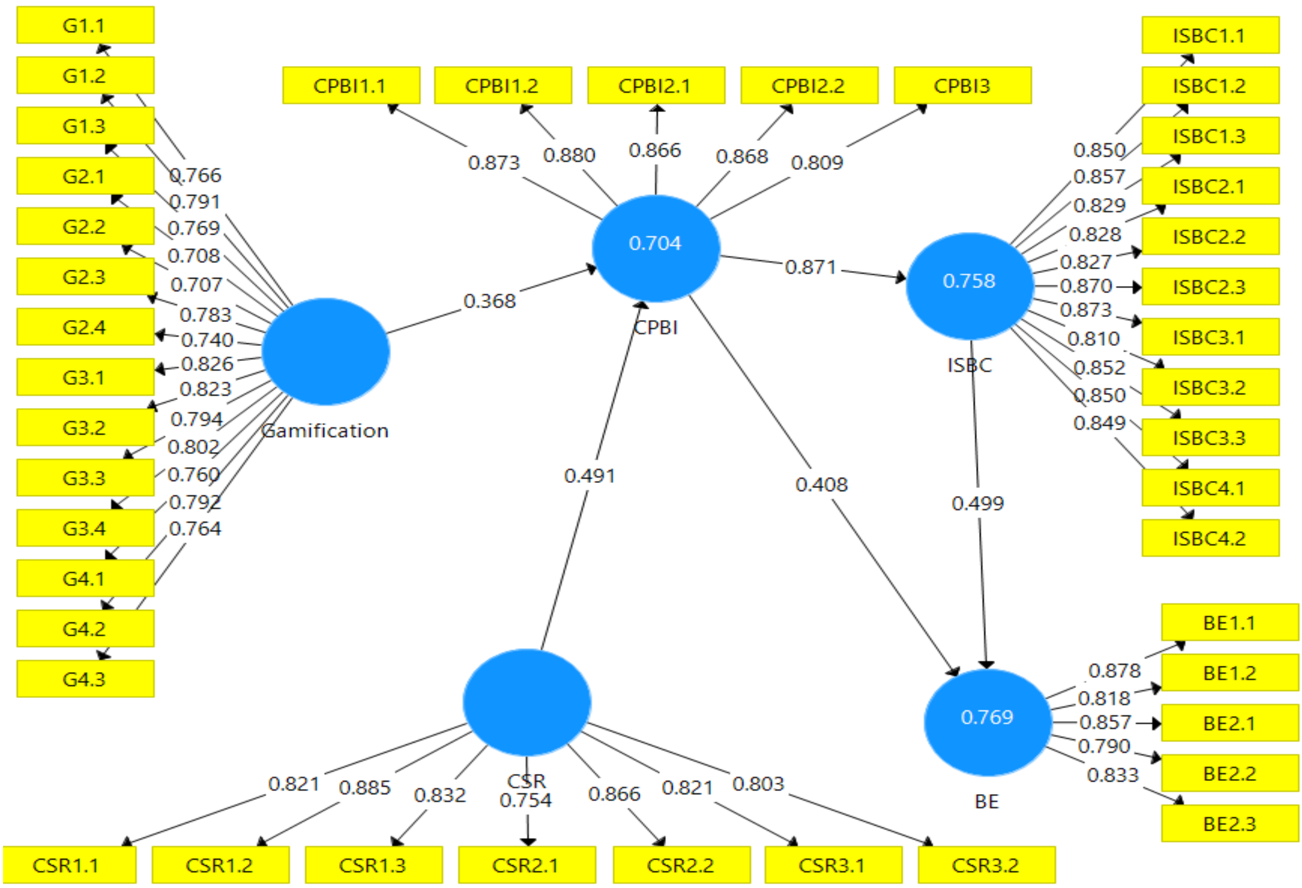


Figure 2. Model fit with R-square

Table 3 and Figure 2 together present a comprehensive evaluation of the research structural model strength. Figure 2 visualizes the causal relationships among constructs with path coefficients indicating influence strength, where CSR (0.491) is more effective compared to gamification (0.368) in influencing CPBI, while CPBI demonstrates a very strong relationship with ISBC (0.871). Table 3 confirms the predictive quality of the model with excellent R^2 values for all endogenous constructs: brand engagement (76.9%), innovative self-brand congruity (75.8%), and consumer perceived brand innovativeness (70.4%). The consistency between structural visualization and R^2 values demonstrates that the model not only has significant relationships among variables but also strong explanatory capability, confirming the validity of the marketing brand innovation theoretical framework within the context of Indonesia's coffee shop industry.

3. Hypothesis results and discussion

3.1. Respondent characteristics

The research sample comprised 300 respondents representing Indonesian coffee shop consumers across multiple geographical regions. Table 4 presents the demographic profile of respondents, revealing diverse characteristics that enhance the generalizability of findings within the Indonesian context.

Table 4. Respondent characteristics

Demographic Profile	Category	Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	140	46.7%
	Female	160	53.3%
Age	16-20 years	36	12.0%
	21-30 years	192	64.0%
	31-40 years	50	16.7%
	41-50 years	22	7.3%
Education	High School	116	38.7%
	Diploma/Bachelor	162	54.0%
	Postgraduate	22	7.3%
Domicile	Java	189	63.0%
	Sumatra	18	6.0%
	Kalimantan	76	25.3%
	Sulawesi	8	2.7%
	Bali/Nusa Tenggara	7	2.3%
	Papua	2	0.7%
Monthly App Usage Frequency	1-3 times	65	21.7%
	4-6 times	134	44.7%
	More than 6 times	101	33.6%
CSR Program Awareness	Yes	300	100.0%
	No	0	0.0%

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

The demographic analysis reveals that the sample predominantly consists of young adults aged 21-30 years (64.0%), reflecting the primary target market for Indonesian coffee shops. The gender distribution shows slight female dominance (53.3% vs 46.7%), consistent with coffee consumption patterns in urban Indonesia. Educational backgrounds indicate a well-educated sample with 61.3% holding diploma or higher qualifications, suggesting sufficient sophistication to evaluate brand innovation strategies. Geographically, the sample represents Indonesia's major islands, with Java accounting for 63.0% of respondents, followed by Kalimantan (25.3%), providing adequate regional representation. The frequency of coffee shop app usage demonstrates active engagement, with 78.3% of respondents using coffee shop applications 4 or more times monthly, indicating substantial experience with digital loyalty programs and gamification features. Importantly, all respondents demonstrated awareness of CSR programs from their respective coffee shop brands, ensuring a qualified assessment of corporate social responsibility initiatives' impact on brand perceptions.

3.2. Hypothesis testing results

After the measurement model was confirmed as meeting validity and reliability criteria, the next stage involves testing research hypotheses through structural model evaluation. Hypothesis testing in this research employs a T-statistic ≥ 1.96 with P-values < 0.05 criteria to accept hypotheses at a 5% significance level [30]. Analysis was conducted on two effect categories: direct effects that examine direct relationships among constructs, and indirect effects that evaluate mediating roles in the research model. Hypothesis testing results are shown in Table 5 for direct effects and Table 6 for indirect effects.

Table 5. Direct effect hypothesis testing result

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	Decision
Gamification → CPBI (H1)	0.368	0.192	1.913	0.056	Unsupported
CSR → CPBI (H2)	0.491	0.172	2.849	0.005	Supported
CPBI → ISBC (H3)	0.871	0.034	25.440	0.000	Supported
CPBI → BE (H4)	0.408	0.112	3.630	0.000	Supported
ISBC → BE (H5)	0.499	0.122	4.098	0,000	Supported

Sumber: *Smart*PLS 3, data processed, 2025

Table 6. Indirect effect hypothesis testing result

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	Decision
Gamification → CPBI→ BE (H6)	0.150	0.093	1.608	0.109	Unsupported
CSR → CPBI→ BE (H7)	0.200	0.078	2.561	0.011	Supported
Gamification→CPBI→ ISBC (H8)	0.320	0.171	1.867	0.062	Unsupported
CSR → CPBI→ ISBC (H9)	0.428	0.148	2.891	0.004	Supported
CPBI → ISBC→ BE (H10)	0.434	0.108	4.022	0.000	Supported

Sumber: *Smart*PLS 3, data processed 2025

Table 5 presents the direct effects testing results, revealing interesting findings regarding the differential influence of marketing brand innovation components on consumer perceived brand innovativeness. The first hypothesis (H1) proposing a positive influence of gamification on CPBI did not receive empirical support (β = 0.368; T-stat = 1.913; p = 0.056). Conversely, the second hypothesis (H2) proposing a positive effect of CSR on CPBI proved significant (β = 0.491; T-stat = 2.849; p = 0.005). These findings reveal complex dynamics within the context of Indonesia's coffee shop industry, where not all forms of marketing innovation are perceived equally by consumers.

The non-significance of gamification's influence on CPBI can be explained through the perspective of technology saturation and the evolution of consumer expectations in the digital era. Indonesian coffee shop consumers are currently exposed to various loyalty applications using similar gamification elements, ranging from point systems, membership levels, to badges and rewards [6] [7]. This condition causes the presence of gamification features to no longer be perceived as innovative differentiation that distinguishes one brand from another. As explained by [6], gamification effectiveness heavily depends on novelty and contextual relevance. When game design elements have become industry standards, their impact on brand innovation perception becomes significantly reduced. Furthermore, these findings can also be linked to characteristics of Indonesian coffee consumers who tend to prioritize substance over superficial entertainment. Gamification can lose its effectiveness when consumers begin questioning the intrinsic value of such activities [7]. Within the coffee shop context, consumers may be more interested in product quality, authentic experiences, and brands' social contributions compared to virtual achievements in applications. These findings contrast with Western studies such as [24] and [25], which found positive effects of gamification on brand engagement and brand equity. The divergent results suggest that gamification effectiveness is highly context-dependent and may be influenced by cultural factors and market saturation levels. Gamification features positively associate with brand engagement in global contexts; our Indonesian findings indicate that cultural values prioritizing substance over entertainment may diminish gamification's perceived innovativeness [24]. Conversely, the significance of CSR's influence on CPBI demonstrates that Indonesian consumers increasingly value sustainability initiatives and social responsibility as authentic manifestations of brand innovation. These findings are consistent with research by [18] showing that when consumers perceive CSR initiatives as providing tangible perceived community value, they tend to view such brands as progressive and innovative. Within the context of local Indonesian coffee shops, programs such as environmentally friendly packaging, local coffee farmer empowerment, sustainable waste management systems, and contributions to community education are perceived as meaningful differentiation. These findings also reflect a shift in Indonesian consumer values, who are increasingly conscious of social and environmental issues. Positive effects of strategic CSR communication on customer engagement can be strengthened by the CSR reputation previously built by companies [26]. Consumers not only seek products that satisfy their personal needs but also desire involvement with brands that make positive contributions to society and the environment. Our CSR findings align with [35] and [29], who demonstrated that authentic CSR enhances brand identification and customer satisfaction.

However, our results extend these findings by specifically linking CSR to brand innovativeness perceptions, which previous studies had not explicitly examined. Unlike Polonsky et al [18], who focused on perceived community value, our study reveals that CSR's effectiveness operates through innovation perception mechanisms, providing a new theoretical pathway for understanding CSR-engagement relationships. However, the superior effectiveness of CSR in the Indonesian context must be interpreted with caution regarding potential long-term risks**.** The risks of greenwashing and consumer skepticism toward inauthentic CSR activities, where consumers become wary of superficial sustainability messages or those disconnected from core business operations [36]. To mitigate these risks, coffee shops must ensure transparency in CSR reporting, demonstrate measurable community impact, and integrate sustainability into their core business model. Cross-cultural perspectives support these findings. Research by Kim & Lee [37] in South Korea demonstrates that CSR authenticity has a significant positive influence on brand attitude, confirming that Asian consumers tend to value the authenticity and fit of CSR initiatives with companies' core activities. These findings strengthen the argument that in collectivist Asian cultural contexts, including Indonesia, consumers are more responsive to CSR perceived as authentic rather than superficial marketing strategies. Therefore, Indonesian coffee shops should prioritize authentic and meaningful CSR initiatives while ensuring alignment between social activities and their core business to avoid greenwashing perceptions that could damage brand reputation.

Regarding the third hypothesis (H3), analysis of the connection linking CPBI and outcome variables shows very interesting results. The third hypothesis proposing a positive influence of CPBI on Innovative Self-Brand Congruity received very strong empirical support ($\beta = 0.871$; T-stat = 25.440; $p = 0.000$). This high path coefficient confirms the theoretical proposition that consumers who perceive brands as innovative tend to experience strong alignment with their innovative self-image. These findings strengthen and extend the self-congruity theory developed by [12] within the specific context of brand innovation. The strength of this relationship indicates that brand innovation perception functions as a powerful signal for consumers to identify alignment with their self-identity. Pappu and Quester [11] explain that consumers who perceive a brand as being innovative tend to associate that brand with characteristics such as novelty, creativity, uniqueness, and adaptability. These associations are highly congruent with the self-image of consumers who consider themselves innovative, forward-thinking, and open to new experiences. This finding also explains why the concept of Innovative Self-Brand Congruity introduced in this study demonstrates strong validity. Consumers tend to identify with brands that possess innovation levels similar to their personal innovation levels [13] [16]. In the coffee shop context, consumers who view themselves as early adopters, tech-savvy, or socially conscious will feel connected to coffee brands that consistently demonstrate innovation in products, services, or social-environmental initiatives.

The fourth hypothesis (H4) proposing a positive effect of CPBI on brand engagement also received significant support ($\beta = 0.408$; T-stat = 3.630; $p = 0.000$). This result is consistent with [13] research, which found that favorable brand perceptions, including innovativeness, positively influence consumer engagement with brands. In the highly competitive coffee shop industry context, consumers who perceive brands as innovative tend to engage more actively cognitively through active information seeking about new products, emotionally through the formation of strong attachments, and behaviorally through participation in brand activities and positive word-of-mouth. The significance of this relationship can also be understood through customer engagement theory developed by [14], where engagement is viewed as a response to perceived value provided by the brand. Brands perceived as innovative offer unique and attractive value propositions, thus motivating consumers to dedicate more time, energy, along emotional resources to interactions with the brand.

The fifth hypothesis (H5), proposing a positive effect of innovative self-brand congruity on brand engagement, was also proven significant ($\beta = 0.499$; T-stat = 4.098; $p = 0.000$). This finding confirms that when consumers recognize alignment between their innovative self-concept with the brand's innovative image, this drives deeper and more sustained engagement with the brand. This result aligns with [27] research, which shows that self-image congruence with brands creates strong psychological connections, which in turn drive sustained engagement. The strength of this relationship can be explained through social identity theory [38], where individuals tend to maintain and strengthen their identities through associations with entities aligned with their self-concept. When consumers identify coffee shop brands as representations of their innovative identity, they become not only consumers but also active brand advocates who promote and maintain the brand's reputation as part of self-enhancement.

Table 6 presents the indirect effects analysis, revealing patterns highly consistent with direct effects findings. The sixth hypothesis (H6) regarding CPBI's mediating function in the connection linking gamification and brand engagement did not receive empirical support ($\beta = 0.150$; T-stat = 1.608; $p = 0.109$). Conversely, the seventh hypothesis (H7) proposing CPBI's mediating role in the CSR-brand engagement relationship proved significant ($\beta = 0.200$; T-stat = 2.561; $p = 0.011$). This consistency of findings strengthens the argument that in the Indonesian coffee shop industry context, CSR represents a more effective brand innovation marketing strategy compared to gamification in building brand innovation perceptions and subsequently driving brand engagement.

This finding has important theoretical implications for understanding the stimulus-organism-response mechanism in brand innovation marketing contexts. CSR as an external stimulus is more effective in activating brand innovation perceptions as internal organisms, which then produce responses in the form of brand engagement. This can be explained through the authenticity and meaningfulness perspective increasingly valued by contemporary consumers. Authentic CSR not only influences customer brand identification but also customer satisfaction, which then cumulatively drives sustained engagement [35]. The Indonesian cultural context also plays an important role in explaining CSR's superior effectiveness compared to gamification. Indonesian cultural values emphasizing *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), social care, and environmental harmony make CSR initiatives more resonant with local consumers. Conversely, gamification elements more oriented toward individual achievement and competition may be less aligned with collectivist values dominant in Indonesian society.

A similar pattern is also evident in the relationship with innovative self-brand congruity. The eighth hypothesis (H8) regarding CPBI's mediating role in the gamification-ISBC relationship did not receive support ($\beta = 0.320$; T-stat = 1.867; $p = 0.062$), while the ninth hypothesis (H9) proposing CPBI's mediating role in the CSR-ISBC relationship proved significant ($\beta = 0.428$; T-stat = 2.891; $p = 0.004$). This result indicates that CSR is not only more effective in building brand innovation perceptions but also in facilitating congruence between consumers' innovative self-image and brands.

This finding reveals important insights that consumers who value innovation are not merely interested in technological innovation or entertainment innovation, but are more inclined to appreciate social innovation and sustainable innovation. CSR enhances brand perceptions as innovative and progressive, which then increases consumer identification with brands [29]. Consumers who perceive themselves as innovative are more likely to identify with brands demonstrating innovation capabilities in addressing social and environmental challenges compared to brands focusing solely on game mechanics.

In testing the mediating effect, the tenth hypothesis (H10) proposing innovative self-brand congruity's mediating role in the CPBI-brand engagement relationship received very strong empirical support ($\beta = 0.434$; T-stat = 4.022; $p = 0.000$). This finding is highly significant as it confirms the crucial role of the novel Innovative Self-Brand Congruity concept as a psychological mechanism explaining how brand innovation perceptions are translated into sustained brand engagement.

This result provides a substantial theoretical contribution by addressing inconsistencies in previous research regarding the CPBI-brand engagement relationship. Previous studies, such as [39] and [40], found diverse and inconsistent results regarding this relationship. This study's findings indicate that CPBI does not always directly drive brand engagement but requires mediation through consumers' innovative self-image congruence with brands. This explains why some previous studies found non-significant results - because they had not considered the mediating function of innovative self-concept congruence. Our mediation findings help reconcile conflicting results in previous literature. While Henseler et al. [34] found significant direct effects between perceived innovativeness and engagement, and [40] reported non-significant relationships, our study reveals that these inconsistencies may stem from the absence of self-congruity mediators. The strong mediation effect ($\beta = 0.434$) suggests that innovative self-brand congruity explains approximately 43% of the pathway between brand innovativeness perceptions and engagement, filling a critical theoretical gap in understanding when and why innovation perceptions translate into behavioral outcomes.

The significance of this mediation confirms that the process of brand engagement formation through brand innovation perceptions is more complex than previously understood. Consumers do not automatically engage with brands they perceive as innovative, but such engagement occurs when they feel congruence between brand innovation and their own innovative identity. This self-identification process then triggers sustained emotional attachment and behavioral commitment.

This finding also strengthens the validity of the innovative self-brand congruity concept as a distinct construct with strong explanatory power. This concept not only enriches self-congruity theory by integrating innovation aspects but also provides a practical framework for understanding and predicting consumer behavior in brand innovation contexts. In practical implementation, coffee shop managers can operationalize these findings by developing innovation-focused brand messaging that communicates progressive values, enabling innovative consumers to recognize alignment with their self-concept [12]. Additionally, managers should design experiential touchpoints that reinforce the innovation-identity connection, including exclusive innovation showcases and co-creation opportunities for consumer participation [13].

Empirically, successful Indonesian coffee chains demonstrate this approach by positioning themselves as socially innovative brands through farmer partnership programs while creating exclusive member experiences. Their strategy includes innovative storytelling through social media and community innovation challenges that reinforce brand-consumer identity alignment [35]. This practical application shows how the theoretical mediation mechanism translates into measurable business outcomes through targeted engagement programs. The identified mediation mechanism provides a clear roadmap for practitioners on how to build sustained brand engagement through appropriate innovation strategies.

4. Implications for research and practice

This research provides substantial theoretical implications by introducing and validating the concept of innovative self-brand congruity as an effective mediating construct within the brand innovation marketing ecosystem. This concept enriches self-congruity theory literature by integrating innovation dimensions while addressing inconsistencies in previous research regarding the connection linking CPBI and brand engagement. This study also reveals the superiority of CSR over gamification in the Indonesian coffee shop industry context, providing important contributions to marketing innovation literature by demonstrating the significance of cultural context in determining the effectiveness of marketing innovation strategies.

Practically, the research findings provide strategic guidance for local coffee shop management to prioritize investments in authentic CSR programs over gamification features that have become industry commodities. Effective CSR programs not only enhance brand innovation perceptions but also facilitate consumer identification with brands, driving sustained brand engagement. For strategy development, these findings indicate the need for meaningful integration frameworks between CSR and gamification, where game design elements support and amplify the impact of social responsibility programs. Management must understand that consumers in developing countries value social innovation and sustainable innovation more highly, making strategies that combine purpose-driven gamification with CSR initiatives more resonant.

From a government policy perspective, these findings suggest important implications for supporting the coffee industry. The government should establish tax incentives for coffee businesses implementing authentic CSR programs with measurable community impact. Regulatory frameworks should create standards for CSR verification to prevent greenwashing practices. Additionally, the government should facilitate collaboration platforms between coffee companies and local farmers, and develop educational programs to raise consumer awareness about corporate social responsibility. Finally, infrastructure support should enable small coffee farmers to participate in corporate partnership programs, creating a more inclusive coffee industry ecosystem.

Operational implications include reorienting resource allocation toward CSR programs with direct community impact, such as partnerships with local coffee farmers and implementation of sustainable waste management systems. Future strategies should integrate gamification elements that support social missions, such as reward systems for participation in recycling programs or community challenges to support local farmers. This hybrid approach not only builds sustainable competitive advantage but also creates a broader positive impact for stakeholders and society.

5. Conclusion

This study successfully identified and validated the crucial role of brand innovation marketing in building brand engagement through complex psychological mechanisms in the Indonesian coffee shop industry. The main findings reveal that corporate social responsibility (CSR) is significantly more effective than gamification in enhancing consumer perceived brand innovativeness, which subsequently drives brand engagement through Innovative Self-Brand Congruity mediation. The novel concept of innovative self-brand congruity proves to be a powerful mediator in explaining how brand innovation perceptions are translated into sustained consumer engagement, addressing inconsistencies in previous research within this domain.

The non-significance of traditional gamification in the research model indicates the need for evolution in gamification approaches from transactional reward-based models toward meaningful gamification integrated with social values. Future gamification needs to incorporate social impact gaming elements, community-driven challenges, and sustainable behavior rewards aligned with CSR values. For example, gamification systems that provide rewards when consumers participate in recycling programs, or community challenges to support local coffee farmers. Conversely, CSR focusing on social and environmental contributions proves more resonant with Indonesian cultural values emphasizing *gotong royong* and communal care yet can be strengthened with gamification elements supporting these social missions.

However, this study acknowledges several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, this research was conducted exclusively within the Indonesian coffee shop industry, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural contexts or industry sectors. Second, the cross-sectional design prevents the establishment of causal relationships, as data were collected at a single point in time. Third, this study relied on self-reported measurements via an online survey, which may introduce common method bias and social desirability response patterns. Fourth, this study focused only on two marketing innovation strategies (CSR and gamification), while other potentially important innovation approaches were not examined.

Theoretically, this research enriches self-congruity theory with innovation dimensions and provides a new understanding of brand engagement formation mechanisms in marketing innovation contexts. The structural model demonstrates excellent predictive strength with R^2 values above 70% for all outcome constructs, validating the robustness of the developed theoretical model. Practically, the result offers strategic guidance for coffee shop management to integrate CSR with meaningful gamification, where game design elements support and amplify social responsibility program impacts. Future research can explore hybrid models combining CSR with purpose-driven gamification and test the application of innovative self-brand congruity concepts in other industries to expand the generalizability of findings.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors confirm that they possess no identified financial or non-financial conflicts of interest regarding any content presented in this manuscript.

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Author contribution

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